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Mrs Elizabeth Harros
Executive Headteacher
Bishop Wilton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School
Main Street
Bishop Wilton
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Dear Mrs Harros

Short inspection of Bishop Wilton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 23 January 2018, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in June 2013.

Based on the evidence available during this short inspection, I have identified some priorities for improvement which I advise the school to address. In light of these priorities, the school's next inspection will be a full section 5 inspection. **There is no change to the school's current overall effectiveness of good as a result of this inspection.**

Following the last inspection, leaders were asked to make the quality of teaching outstanding and improve the effectiveness of children's learning in the early years. Over the past three years almost every child by the end of Reception has reached a good level of development, which is testament to the effectiveness of the school's response to this area for improvement. In contrast, the effectiveness of teaching on pupils' attainment and progress by the end of key stage 2 when set against their starting points has deteriorated. Pupils' attainments by the end of key stage 1 have also been erratic since the previous inspection. This is a worrying development.

The school has a welcoming atmosphere. Pupils are respectful, well behaved and happy. They say that they enjoy coming to school. Relationships between pupils and staff are invariably positive. Parents and carers value the school's caring ethos.

Your self-evaluation of the school's current position matches my own. You have taken a series of considered and coherent actions to address some deep-rooted issues which have contributed to a decline and fluctuations in the school's academic performance in key stage 2 since the previous inspection. There is evidence of fledgling improvements but these need to be sustained and substantially built upon.

Governors have changed their constitution to ensure that they are better equipped and more confident in fully discharging their duties. They have employed a national leader of governance to help them. Governors accept that over time they have not been wholly effective in holding, or informed enough to suitably hold, leaders and other staff to account for the quality of education the school provides. They have set exacting performance management targets for the executive headteacher.

The local authority report they have provided wide-ranging support to the school. There is no evidence that this intervention has had any effect in stemming the decline in the school's academic performance or the effectiveness of teaching. The authority has maintained an unwarranted high opinion of the effectiveness of the school. This blinkered approach has meant that they have not provided appropriate challenge.

The school has received little or no school improvement support from the diocese.

Safeguarding is effective.

Responsible staff ensure that the school's safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Records are detailed and of a high quality. Rigorous checks are conducted to ensure that all staff are safe to work with children. Your safeguarding team has worked successfully to embed a culture of effective safeguarding among all staff.

Records show that you are fastidious in your regular provision of safeguarding training and updates to staff. This helps to ensure that they are aware of, and can apply, the latest guidance and thinking in their practice. Among other things, you have ensured that staff have refreshed their knowledge and understanding of the 'Prevent' duty and the indicators of child exploitation. You have clear systems to record concerns about pupils, and make referrals to the appropriate authority should it be necessary. As designated lead, you have established effective links with a range of external agencies, which support the work you do to keep pupils safe. The positive feedback from parents and pupils is testament to the current effectiveness of your strategy. Pupils I met during the inspection told me that they felt safe in school. They have a good awareness of the different forms of bullying and the distress that it can cause. They do not feel that there is a problem with bullying in their school. Pupils demonstrated an awareness of the potential risks and dangers they might face on the internet and in other situations. Generally, pupils know how to keep themselves safe and whom to turn to if they are in need of support or guidance.

Inspection findings

- There is compelling evidence that over the past three years pupils' attainment and the progress they make from favourable starting points at the end of the early years has not been not good by the time they leave the school, especially in mathematics. There is some recent evidence of accelerated progress across subjects, but this is fledgling and needs to be sustained and substantially built upon. Time will tell whether the school can achieve this. Leaders are aware of

the possible implications if they are unable to demonstrate significant and sustained further improvement by the time of the next inspection.

- We agreed that while there are some features of highly effective teaching within and across subjects, it is not present consistently, which you found disappointing. This variability in practice is reflected in peaks and troughs in pupils' learning as indicated by the work in their books, their varying levels of knowledge and understanding when we spoke to them, and their lack of awareness of what the next steps in their learning are. At times, pupils seemed to be on auto-pilot, as if compliantly drifting through the lesson without being really challenged to excel. These occasions were precipitated by a lack of engagement. When I asked pupils what could be done to improve their enjoyment of learning, they said they would make learning fun and active and not use so many worksheets! You agreed that the learning environment is not as inspiring as it could be and conceded that there are missed opportunities to really immerse pupils in their learning to inspire deeper understanding, better engagement and create lasting memories.
- Nursery and Reception children thrive in this school. A varied curriculum, careful planning, accurate assessment and a good balance between child-initiated and teacher-led activities underpin the successful formula. There are some missed chances for children to explore the indoor and outdoor provision simultaneously.
- Pupils enjoy the curriculum on offer and listed craft, history and physical education as their favourites. They enjoy reading at home for pleasure and often bring their own books into school with them. They read fluently and accurately for the most part. They can persevere and find suitable strategies when faced with unfamiliar words. Until recently, there has not been a structured approach to systematically developing pupils' confidence and competence in reading which takes account of their prior learning. Pupils lamented the lack of opportunity to learn a foreign language or develop their computer skills, knowledge and understanding. You agree pupils need better preparation for living in modern multicultural Britain.
- You accept that there is work to do to embed a rational and reliable assessment system which stands up to scrutiny, helps you to track how well pupils are progressing in their learning and can identify precisely what they need to do to meet and exceed the challenging targets you are now setting for them.
- You have made a positive start in getting the school back on track and in so doing demonstrated capacity. The improvement measures you have introduced are beginning to bear fruit. You are not complacent and recognise the extent of the additional improvement required if the school is going to sustain or improve upon its good rating at the next inspection. You are aware that improvement will only be achieved by the collective determined efforts of all stakeholders and interested parties. I wish you success!

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they and other responsible authorities such as the local authority and diocese

increase their effectiveness in driving and supporting improvement of the quality of education that the school provides

- the quality and consistency of teaching and the accuracy of assessment improves markedly so that pupils' learning flourishes throughout the school
- the progress that pupils make as they move through the school is sustained and built upon from their favourable starting points at the start of key stage 1
- the curriculum is sufficiently balanced, engaging and challenging enough to meet the needs and interests of all pupils.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Diocese of York, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for the East Riding of Yorkshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

John Young
Senior Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

The main areas I focused on during the inspection were the effectiveness of teaching, learning and assessment across the curriculum in securing and/or sustaining pupils' good or better progress and high attainment, as they move through the school. I also evaluated the effect of leaders, governors and other responsible bodies in sustaining and/or building upon the good quality of education reported at the previous inspection. In addition, I considered the school's curriculum provision and the extent to which it met pupils' needs and interests.

During the inspection I met with you to discuss the effectiveness of leadership and management. We jointly observed teaching, learning and assessment in all classes. We scrutinised work in pupils' books to consider the progress being made by pupils currently in school. I listened to pupils read. I read school documentation such as policies, curriculum arrangements, assessment information, monitoring files and your school improvement plans. I met with four governors, including the chair and vice-chair. I spoke to pupils formally in meetings and informally at social times. I reviewed the 41 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. I took account of the four responses parents offered by free text. No staff or pupils registered a response to Ofsted's online questionnaire.

The school is part of a federation with Beswick and Watton CE (VC) and Middleton on-the-Wolds CE (VC) primary schools. The executive headteacher is responsible for all three schools. There is one governing body which serves all three schools. The executive headteacher has been in post since September 2017.

Bishop Wilton CE (VC) Primary School is small rural school with 41 pupils on roll.

There are only handfuls of children in each year group. This makes references to the relative performance of different groups of pupils meaningless. Currently there are four Year 6, seven Year 5, seven Year 4 and six Year 3 children in key stage 2.